(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to ensure that benefits of the scheme reach the small and marginal farmers; and

(d) the present status of the scheme and the amount of money spent on it, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The scheme has the following components:—

(i) IT Apparatus in Department of Agriculture & Cooperation Headquarters

(ii) IT Apparatus in the Field Offices and Directorates of DAC

(iii) Development of Agricultural Informatics and Communication

(iv) Agricultural Resources Information System (AgRIS)

(v) Strengthening of IT Apparatus in Agriculture & Cooperation in the States and Union Territories (AGRISNET)

(vi) Kisan Call Centres (KCC)

(c) The aim of components (iii), (iv) and (v) above is to provide information/ services to all farmers, including small and marginal farmers, using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) through development of web-based applications.

Kisan Call Centres (KCC) have been set up to provide information to all farmers, including small and marginal farmers, on queries raised by them on different aspects through toll free telephone lines.

(d) All the components of the scheme are under implementation. The total amount spent under the scheme so far during the Tenth Plan is Rs. 48.57 crores.

Special package for farmers of Orrisa

1799. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Orissa Government proposes to announce a special

package for their beleaguered farmers, to help them to increase farm production and export of these commodities, especially in the tribal dominated KBK region, with a view to improve their living;

(b) whether the Centre also proposes to extend financial and physical help to this backward State facilitate execution of this project; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) As per the information furnished by the Government of Orissa, a package for farmers of the State was announced on 29.7.2006. The package, *inter alia,* covers measures for (i) enhancing the Seed Replacement Rates of different crops; (ii) sales of seeds through Sales centres extended to gram panchayat level; (iii) establishment of new Soil Testing Laboratories; (iv) encouraging farmers to adopt organic farming; (v) providing training to farmers at the block level under Krushak Sathi Programme; (vi) promotion of irrigation facilities including private lift irrigation point, execution of farm ponds for BPL persons in 8 drought-prone districts and creation of a minimum of 35% irrigation potential in each block; (vii) implementation of horticulture plantation programme; (viii) providing credit facilities through Kisan Credit Cards by the State Cooperative Banks; (ix) improved agricultural marketing facilities and (x) pisiculture and livestock development.

Further, a Special Plan for KBK districts is being administered by the Central Government since 2002-03 under the Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana, now replaced by Backward Regions Grant Fund, on a 100% grant basis.

Stopping shifting cultivation

1800. SHRI LALHMING LIANA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have under-taken any ambitious step to stop shifting cultivation in the tribal areas during the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the States covered under the scheme;

(c) how many tribal people were given alternative employment under the scheme; and